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ACTION ARA-10

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FM AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 6828

C O N F I D E N T I A L SANTIAGO 0662

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: MARR, CI

SUBJECT: REGIONAL STUDY ON CONVENTIONAL ARMS SUPPLY RESTRAINTS

REFS: (A) STATE 015423, (B) 75 SANTIAGO 6816

1. SUMMARY: GOC HAS ACTIVELY PURSUED SUBREGIONAL ARMS LIMITATIONS FOR PRAGMATIC, IMMEDIATE REASONS: PERU HAS BUILT UP ITS FORCES AT A TIME WHEN CHILE CANNOT GAIN ACCESS TO TRADITIONAL ARMS SUPPLIERS, HAS NO ACCESS TO COMMUNIST SUPPLIERS EVEN IF IT WISHED, AND HAS NOT THE MONEY TO BUY THROUGH EXOTIC CHANNELS. GOC WOULD NOT RELISH US USURPATION OF SUBREGIONAL EFFORTS TO MOVE TOWARD ARMS RESTRAINT, BUT GOC HAS TOUCHED BASE WITH EMBASSY MILITARY ADVISORS TO INQUIRE IF WE WOULD PROVIDE TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE SHOULD LATINS REACH ACCORD, AND THEY ARE PLEASED WITH ASSISTANT SECRETARY ROGERS' WORDS OF ENCOURAGEMENT. THEREFORE WE THINK GOC WOULD BE RECEPTIVE TO CAREFULLY THOUGHT-OUT US POSITION IN WHICH LATINS WOULD BE SEEN AS TAKING LEAD. FURTHER DOWN THE ROAD, CHILEANS MIGHT POSSIBLY BUY CONCEPT OF GUARANTEED, REASONABLE SUPPLY OF WEAPONS MADE AVAILABLE BY US TO COUNTRIES OF REGION, WITHOUT POLITICAL CONDITIONS AND MONITORED BY LATIN-DOMINATED MECHANISM WHICH WOULD BROKER INDIVIDUAL COUNTRY REQUESTS. END SUMMARY.

2. CHILE'S CURRENT SPONSORSHIP OF THE ILL-DEFINED MILITARY

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TALKS WITH PERU AND BOLIVIA, ITS SIGNATURE OF THE AYACHUCHO

AGREEMENT AND ITS EFFORTS TO EXTEND AYACHUCHO TO ALL SOUTH AMERICAN GOVERNMENTS EVIDENCE REAL SUPPORT FOR REGIONAL ARMS RESTRAINT (REF B). NOTWITHSTANDING CHILE'S SERIOUS INTEREST IN SUCH AGREEMENTS, WE BELIEVE THE GOC HAS NO ILLUSIONS ABOUT PROBLEMS SURROUNDING, AND MEAGER CHANCES FOR, EFFECTIVE ACCORDS. WE DOUBT CHILE WOULD TAKE SUCH AN ENLIGHTENED VIEW TOWARDS ARMS CONTROL IF IT WERE FLUSH WITH HIGH COPPER EARNINGS AND PERSONA GRATA TO TRADITIONAL ARMS SUPPLIERS. TODAY'S GOC HAS SOUND, PRACTICAL REASONS TO LISTEN ATTENTIVELY TO ANYONE'S IDEAS ON THE SUBJECT.

3. FOLLOWING FACTORS FAVOR ARMS RESTRAINT FROM CHILEAN PERSPECTIVE:

A. GOC RECOGNIZES THE ABSENCE OF EXTRAHEMISPHERIC MILITARY THREATS -- ALTHOUGH IT EXAGGERATES THE SOVIET POLITICAL THREAT.

B. IT FEARS PERUVIAN ADVENTURISM WHILE CHILE IS MILITARILY WEAK. REGIONAL RESTRAINT AGREEMENTS WOULD INHIBIT PERU, OR AT LEAST PROVIDE JUSTIFICATION FOR GOC TO ASPIRE TO EVENTUAL "PARITY" WITH PERU.

C. RIGHT NOW CHILE CANNOT BUY WEAPONS, AND THE COST OF SOPHISTICATED NEW SYSTEMS IS ROCKETTING.

4. FACTORS OPPOSING RESTRAINT ARE VARIATIONS ON THE FOREGOING THEMES:

A. SO LONG AS PERU (AND TO MUCH LESSER EXTENT ARGENTINA) HAVE MILITARY SUPERIORITY, CHILE'S MILITARY WILL CHAFE AND DEMAND APPROXIMATE PARITY WITH PERU.

B. SO LONG AS CHILE HAS NO ASSURED AND STABLE SUPPLIER, IT WILL FEEL PRESSURE TO SHOP AROUND FOR WEAPONS, WITHOUT MEASURED REGARD FOR APPROPRIATENESS OF TYPE OR QUANTITY.

5. CREATION OF A BOLIVIAN CORRIDOR WOULD BE LIKELY TO RELIEVE APPREHENSION OF PERUVIAN REVANCHISM BUT WE COULD EXPECT CONTINUING PRESSURES FOR WEAPONS BEYOND WHAT WE MIGHT
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THINK REASONABLE AND APPROPRIATE. CHILEAN MILITARY INSTITUTIONS, PROUD OF THEIR PLACE IN SOCIETY, RESPOND TO INTERNALLY GENERATED REQUIREMENTS FOR MODERNITY. AGING AND OBSOLETE MATERIAL IN CHILE'S ARSENAL MEANS CONTINUED DEMANDS FOR NEW WEAPONS IN THE FORESEEABLE FUTURE.

6. WE BELIEVE GOC WOULD LISTEN POLITELY TO ANY US IDEAS ON SUBJECT OF ARMS RESTRAINT IN HEMISPHERE, PRINCIPALLY BECAUSE

THEY HAVE NO OTHER RECOURSE. BUFFETED BY CURRENT US ARMS POLICIES, CHILEANS WOULD HARBOR ADDITIONAL SUSPICIONS ABOUT OUR MOTIVES. CHILE NOW WOULD PREFER US TO ENDORSE LATIN INITIATIVES AND TO SHOW LOW-KEYED WILLINGNESS TO PROVIDE SPECIALIZED, TECHNICAL ADVICE RATHER THAN TO PROMOTE OUR OWN SCHEME.

7. CHILE ALREADY IS EXPERIENCING THE CUTTING EDGE OF CONGRESSIONAL CONCERN REGARDING ARMS TRANSFERS. WE CAN ONLY SPECULATE THAT THE GOC'S REACTION TO REGIONAL CUTOFF OF MILITARY ASSISTANCE WOULD NOT BE PARTICULARLY VEHEMENT OR STRIDENT SINCE OTHERS WOULD THEN BE TREATED IN SAME MANNER AS CHILE.

8. WE BELIEVE THAT THE TWO DRIVING FORCES FOR ARMS ACQUISITIONS IN THE HEMISPHERE ARE INTER-STATE RIVALRIES AND THE INTERNAL MOMENTUM OF POWERFUL INSTITUTIONS TO REMAIN CONTEMPORARY. NEITHER IS LIKELY TO DISAPPEAR, US SECURITY GUARANTEES OR LIBERAL ARMS TRANSFERS NOTWITHSTANDING.

9. WHILE WE DO NOT CONSIDER FOLLOWING SCHEME TO BE CURRENTLY FEASIBLE, WE PUT IT FORWARD AS BASIS FOR BRAINSTORMING IN THIS FIELD.

10. BUILDING FROM SOME EXISTING LEVEL OF LATIN CONSENSUS ON CEILING AND NONACQUISITION-TYPE AGREEMENTS, WE WOULD ENCOURAGE HEMISPHERE STATES TO FORESWEAR PURCHASE OF CERTAIN WEAPONS SYSTEMS (BALLISTIC MISSILES, ATTACK CARRIERS, ETC). WE WOULD GUARANTEE TO SELL OR LICENSE NON-PROHIBITED WEAPONS UP TO A GIVEN DOLLAR AMOUNT PER YEAR OVER A NUMBER OF YEARS, ACCORDING TO A MIX DETERMINED BY A HEMISPHERE MECHANISM NOT DOMINATED BY THE US. WE WOULD STOP USING ARMS POLICY TO INFLUENCE EXPROPRIATIONS OR FISHING DISPUTES. WE WOULD ELIMINATE THE TROUBLESOME THIRD-COUNTRY TRANSFER REQUIREMENTS. IN FACT, CONFIDENTIAL

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WE WOULD DO AWAY WITH ALL POLITICAL CONDITIONS.

11. RECEIVING STATES WOULD NOT NEED TO COMMIT THEMSELVES TO US SUPPLIERS; THEY WOULD BE FREE TO PURCHASE WORLDWIDE. WE EXPECT, HOWEVER, THAT AT THE ANNUAL CUTTING OF THE PIE,, OTHER STATES WOULD TAKE ENTIRETY OF EACH COUNTRIES' PROCUREMENT INTO ACCOUNT IN ADJUDICATING THE MIX. THOSE COUNTRIES WISHING TO MODERNIZE OVER PERIOD OF YEARS COULD DO SO, CONFIDENT THAT BALANCE COULD BE MAINTAINED.

12. OUR SUGGESTION HAS ITS PROBLEMS, BUT IT WOULD HAVE MERIT OF BEING SELF-POLICING AND NOT PATERNALISTIC. RECEIVING STATES RETAIN LATITUDE TO SPREAD PURCHASES AS THEY WISH BUT WOULD HAVE ADDITIONAL INDUCEMENT TO WORK TOGETHER. NEITHER DO WE PLEDGE WHAT WE CANNOT PRODUCE. AT WORST, IF WE RENEGE, NO

PARTICIPATING STATE HAS BECOME DEPENDENT ON A US DEFENSE
GUARANTEE.

13. WHILE OUR SUGGESTION IS APPLICABLE TO ENTIRE REGION, IT
MIGHT BE EXTENDED TO SUBREGION ALONE. ANDEAN NEGOTIATIONS
HAVE MADE SOME PROGRESS, PARTICULARLY IN DEFINING NON-
ACQUISITION ACCORDS. WE REMAIN SKEPTICAL ABOUT SIGNIFICANT
RESULTS FROM THE CURRENT EFFORT, BUT SHOULD THEY EMERGE,
A SUBREGIONAL VERSION COULD FOSTER FURTHER COOPERATIVE
VENTURES AND MIGHT EASE TENSIONS.
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